

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT VELASCO SPEAKS OUT ON CIVIL DISORDERS

REF: LIMA 1317

SUMMARY. PRESIDENT VELASCO SPOKE TO NATION FEBRUARY 17 RE FEBRUARY 5 CIVIL DISORDERS. HE SAID CRISIS, WHICH BECAME VAIN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT, WAS OVER. VELASCO BLAMED RIOTS ON APRA LEADERSHIP AND TO LESSER EXTENT ON RIGHT AND LEFT WING EXTREMISTS. HE ALSO ALLUDED TO OLIGARCHY AND MADE THINLY VEILED REFERENCE TO ALLEGED CIA INVOLVEMENT. FOR MOST PART SPEECH WAS CONCILIATORY IN TONE, ESPECIALLY TOWARD CIVIL GUARD. VELASCO STRESSED THAT GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ENGAGE IN REPRESSION. REVOLUTION WILL CONTINUE PEACEFUL. END SUMMARY.

1. IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE SINCE FEBRUARY 5 CIVIL DISTURBANCES PERESIDENT VELASCO GAVE NATION-WIDE TV AND RADIO ADDRESS MONDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 17. VELASCO APPEARED TIRED AND UNCOMFORTABLE BUT SPOKE FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR MAKING THE FOLLOWING MAJOR POINTS.

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2. VELASCO SAID THAT THE CRISIS WAS OVER. IT HAD ONLY AFFECTED

LIMA. CRISIS WAS PROOF, SAID VELASCO, THAT ARMED FORCES ARE THE GUARANTOR OF PEACE AND TRANQUILITY IN PERU. HE ASSERTED THAT THE MILITARY HAS EMERGED MORE UNITED AND STRONGER FOR THIS TEST. ACCORDING TO VELASCO, PROBLEMS IN THE CIVIL GUARD "WERE UTILIZED BY THE ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENTS AS A WEAPON AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE IT". VELASCO STATED THAT THE TEMPORARY ABSENCE OF POLICE (AND NOT THE MILITARY ATTACK ON THE CIVIL GUARD) HAD CREATED CONDITIONS LEADING TO CIVIL DISORDER.

3. VELASCO ZEROED IN ON APRA CHIEFS AND THEIR "ETERNAL LEADER", (OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO APRA'S HAYA DE LA TORRE) TERMING THEM THE INSTIGATORS OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS. HE SAID THAT THE PERUVIAN REVOLUTION IS PEACEFUL AND IT VIEWS THESE HATEMONGERS WITH INDIGNATION AND REPUGNANCE. VELASCO DID NOT MENTION SPECIFIC ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN AGAINST APRA PARTY BUT LIMITED HIMSELF TO DECLARING THAT ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS WOULD DETERMINE CULPABILITY OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED. VELASCO SAID THAT HE IN NO WAY MEANT TO CONDEMN THE MEN AND WOMEN CONSTITUTING APRA RANK AND FILE FOR "WE KNOW THAT THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN MISLED. WE KNOW THAT THEY CONTINUE TO BE USED BY THE AMBITIOUS VANITY OF THE RULING CLIQUE".

4. VELASCO INCLUDED IN THE MASTER-MINDING OF THE "PERVERSE PLAN" THOSE "OLD PRIVILEGED GROUPS, BOTH NATIONAL AND INTER-NATIONAL, WHOSE CONTROL OVER PERU WAS ENDED BY OUR REVOLUTION".

5. VELASCO CAREFULLY AVOIDED MENTION OF CIA BY NAME BUT DID SAY THAT BEHIND THE DISTURBANCES WAS "VERY LIKELY THE INSPIRATION AND MONEY OF A KNOWN INTERNATIONAL ESPIONAGE ORGANIZATION". (THE FAITHFUL CLAQUE ALWAYS PRESENT AT VELASCO'S SPEECHES WAS MORE EXPLICIT, CHANTING "APRA, ULTRA (READ UL TRA-LEFTISTS), AND CIA, THE SAME FILTH".)

6. VELASCO CLAIMED THAT TLV PROBLEMS OF THE CIVIL GUARD WERE INTERNAL ONES AND ARE NOW BEING RESOLVED. INSOFAR AS THEY INVOLVE THE GOVERNMENT, THEY ARE BEING CAREFULLY STUDIED AND "WILL BE RESOLVED WITH JUSTICE AND IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNTRY'S ABILITIES". VELASCO PRAISED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE CIVIL GUARD AND EXTENDED THE GRATITUDE OF BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO THIS IMPORTANT INSTITUTION. HE SAID THAT THE MILITARY AND THE CIVIL GUARD MUST WORK TOGETHER IN SERVICE TO PERU.

7. PERSONAL INJURIES AND PROPERTY DAMAGE. VELASCO OFFERED NO STATISTICS BUT STATED THAT "NUMBEROUS" LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST WITH THE MAJORITY OF VICTIMS COUNTED AMONG LOOTERS AND THOSE WHO

DEFENDED FAMILY AND PROPERTY. VELASCO FLATLY DECLARED THAT NO MEMBER OF THE CIVIL GUARD HAD BEEN KILLED.

8. VELASCO DID PRODUCE STATISTICS ON PROPERTY DAMAGE --TWO BILLION SOLES (CRICA \$47,000,000) DUE TO LOOTING, WITH DAMAGE TO THE CIVIC CENTER ALONE AMOUNTING TO SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLION SOLES. WITH EVIDENT EMOTION VELASCO CONDEMNED THE BURNING OF THE DOWNTOWN MILITARY CLUB WHICH WAS "FOR US A SECOND HOME." HE SAID THAT THE PERUVIAN ARMY WOULD NOT FORGET THIS "SAVAGE AFFRONT TO OUR INSTITUTION".

9. POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE REVOLUTION. IN REFERENCE TO AND REPUDIATION OF RECENT CALLS FOR CIVILIAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS IN DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION, VELASCO REITERATED THE NATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE PERUVIAN REVOLUTION AND ITS REJECTION OF BOTH CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM. THE REVOLUTION, SAID VELASCO, ACCEPTS SUPPORT FROM THOSE GROUPS ND INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE GIVEN IT. BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT ONLY THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT CAN CARRY OUT THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. THIS PREVENTS "DISORIENTATION" AND "INFILTRATION" WHICH COULD "DIVERT THE REVOLUTION FROM ITS CLEARLY NATIONAL AND PERUVIAN PATH". A SUPPORTER OF THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT NECESSARILY BE CONSIDERED A "MILITANT", SAID VELASCO. THE ONLY INDIVIDUALS ACCEPTABLE AS REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVISTS ARE THOSE WHO EXHIBIT PROPER REVOLUTIONARY CREDENTIALS "ABANDONING OTHER CAUSES AND SUBSCRIBING TOTALLY TO THE IDEOLOGY OF THE REVOLUTION".

10. REJECTION OF REPRESSION. IN SPITE OF WHAT HE CALLED AN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT, VELASCO EMPHASITICALLY STATED THAT THE "GOVERNMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES WILL NOT BE MADE TO ADOPT AN IRRESPONSIBLE POLICY OF MASSIVE REPRESSION ... THOSE WHO TURN OUT TO BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RESPONSIBLE FOR POLITICAL CRIMES AND COMMON CRIMES THAT ARE TODAY BEING INVESTIGATED WILL BE PUNISHED BUT EQUALY LET NO ONE THINK THAT WE ARE GOING TO CHANGE THE REVOLUTION'S PRACTICE AND BECOME A GOVERNMENT WHICH PERSECUTES ITS OPPONENTS JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE OPPONENTS." THE REVOLUTION, CONTINUED VELASCO, WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PEACEFUL ONE AND ONE WHICH REJECTS VIOLENCE.

11. COMMENT: SPEECH WAS OVERDUE AND SOMEWHAT ANTICLIMACTIC. IT DID NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS AS TO WHY MILITARY MOVED AGAINST POLICE OR CURRENT STATE OF PLAY IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CIVIL GUARD OVER PAY AND OTHER BENEFITS. YET SPEECH, WITH ITS TENACIOUS INSISTENCE THAT NO POLICEMEN WERE KILLED, WAS CONCILIATORY TOWARD THE CIVIL GUARD. IT STRESSED THE NEED FOR MILITARY AND CIVIL GUARD COOPERATION IN THE GOVERNING TASK. ALTHOUGH IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE SPEECH EMPHASITICALLY REJECTED

REPRESSION, IT IS UNCLEAR WHAT COURSE OF ACTION THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE AGAINST APRA. SPEECH WAS STRONGEST GOP ATTACK TO DATE ON APRA LEADERSHIP. APRA AS AN ORGANIZATION IS UNLIKELY TO BE PROSCRIBED BUT ITS LEADERS MAY BE IN FOR A DIFFICULT PERIOD.

FINALLY, VELASCO SQUELCHED THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) AND CERTAIN INTELLECTUALS TO SET UP A CIVILIAN POLITICAL MOVEMENT NOT UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL. THE MILITARY THUS RETAIN FREEDOM OF MANEUVER.

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